

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 317

October 7, 1999, 11:24 a.m.
Page S-12158 Temp. Record

LABOR-HHS-EDUCATION/Programs for Disadvantaged Students (Title I Funding)

SUBJECT: Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2000 . . . S. 1650. Coverdell motion to table the Bingaman amendment No. 1861.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 53-45

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1650, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2000, will provide \$324.2 billion in new budget authority, which is \$22.531 billion more than provided in fiscal year (FY) 1999 and is \$911.0 million less than requested. This amount includes advance discretionary and mandatory appropriations and \$9.902 billion in spending from trust funds. Budget authority for fiscal year 2000 discretionary spending will total \$84.018 billion.

The Bingaman amendment would earmark \$200 million (2.5 percent) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I funding in the bill for State and local accountability programs to identify schools that are performing poorly and to provide funding for activities, such as professional development, in order to improve those schools' performance. Funding for local school district Title I grants would be reduced as a result of this earmark. (Title I funding is given to assist in educating disadvantaged students. Currently, .5 percent of Title I funding is reserved for accountability programs.)

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Coverdell moved to table the Bingaman amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

We agree with the intent of this amendment, but it would deal with the situation in the wrong way. First, the amendment would take money that currently goes directly to local school districts and would give it to States for accountability programs for failing schools. It would require 2.5 percent, up from 0.5 percent, of funds provided to States under Title I to be reserved for accountability

(See other side)

| YEAS (53) | | | NAYS (45) | | | NOT VOTING (2) | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Republicans (53 or 98%) | Democrats (0 or 0%) | | Republicans (1 or 2%) | Democrats (44 or 100%) | | Republicans (1) | Democrats (1) |
| Abraham | Helms | | Lugar | Akaka | Kennedy | McCain- ² | Dodd- ⁴ |
| Allard | Hutchinson | | | Baucus | Kerrey | | |
| Ashcroft | Hutchison | | | Bayh | Kerry | | |
| Bennett | Inhofe | | | Biden | Kohl | | |
| Bond | Jeffords | | | Bingaman | Landrieu | | |
| Brownback | Kyl | | | Boxer | Lautenberg | | |
| Bunning | Lott | | | Breaux | Leahy | | |
| Burns | Mack | | | Bryan | Levin | | |
| Campbell | McConnell | | | Byrd | Lieberman | | |
| Chafee | Murkowski | | | Cleland | Lincoln | | |
| Cochran | Nickles | | | Conrad | Mikulski | | |
| Collins | Roberts | | | Daschle | Moynihan | | |
| Coverdell | Roth | | | Dorgan | Murray | | |
| Craig | Santorum | | | Durbin | Reed | | |
| Crapo | Sessions | | | Edwards | Reid | | |
| DeWine | Shelby | | | Feingold | Robb | | |
| Domenici | Smith, Bob (I) | | | Feinstein | Rockefeller | | |
| Enzi | Smith, Gordon | | | Graham | Sarbanes | | |
| Fitzgerald | Snowe | | | Harkin | Schumer | | |
| Frist | Specter | | | Hollings | Torricelli | | |
| Gorton | Stevens | | | Inouye | Wellstone | | |
| Gramm | Thomas | | | Johnson | Wyden | | |
| Grams | Thompson | | | | | | |
| Grassley | Thurmond | | | | | | |
| Gregg | Voinovich | | | | | | |
| Hagel | Warner | | | | | | |
| Hatch | | | | | | | |

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

programs. We generally prefer sending educational assistance directly to schools. This amendment would be much better if it did not take money from local school districts and give it to State governments. Second, the amendment would not give the States any option; they would have to spend the money on these mandated accountability purposes or lose it. We think they should have the option of giving it right back to local school districts to pay for actually educating low-income students. Third, we note that most States already have in place statewide accountability systems that are working well. Such States may find that getting this earmark may prove eventually to be a curse rather than a blessing, because Federal funding almost inevitably develops numerous program and reporting requirements. Fourth, this amendment would circumvent the appropriate procedure for redirecting funds under the ESEA. The authorizing committees that are responsible for the reauthorization of the ESEA should first review this proposal in order to weigh all of its benefits (which we recognize) as well as its costs. In the future, we may well be convinced of the merit of enacting some form of this proposal. At this point, though, we must support the motion to table the Bingaman amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

We need to increase accountability in our educational system in general, and in the expenditure of Title I funds in particular. This amendment would accomplish that purpose. This amendment is fiscally responsible, has a direct target (failing schools), and provides for numerous types of intervention. It is fiscally responsible because it would not add money to the bill; rather, it would redesignate to accountability programs funds previously allotted to other educational areas. We support that transfer because we believe increasing accountability of failing public schools is a higher priority than other educational funding. Further, we believe that it is necessary because States need guidance on how to better spend their funds. The amendment should also be supported because it is carefully focused. It would provide \$200 million in direct assistance to low-performing schools and would compel school districts to take strong corrective actions to improve consistently low-performing schools. Funds would be provided to a failing school as soon as it was identified. Finally, this amendment should be supported because it would give State and local governments great flexibility in choosing the appropriate remedies for their unique needs. For some failing schools, the best solution might be to purchase new materials and textbooks, other schools might need to focus on intensive teacher training, off-site distance learning, extended afternoon and Saturday programs, incentive systems to give rewards for significant school improvements, or intensive technical assistance. This amendment would provide extra funds for the multitude of public schools that are failing to properly educate our children and would not cost American taxpayers an extra dime. We urge our colleagues to vote against the motion to table.